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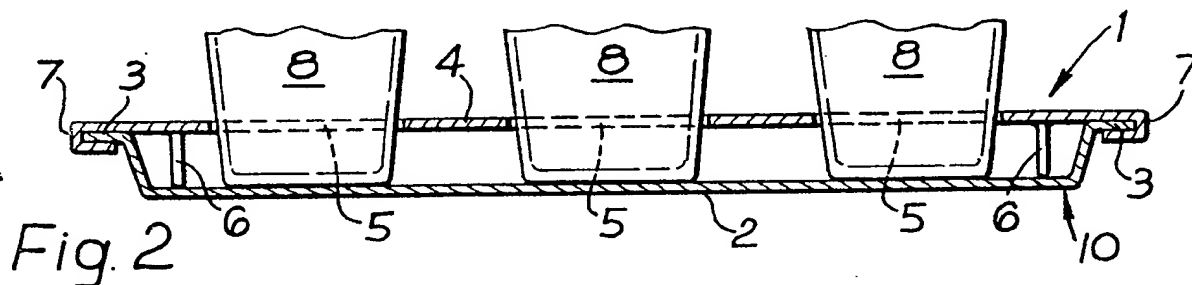
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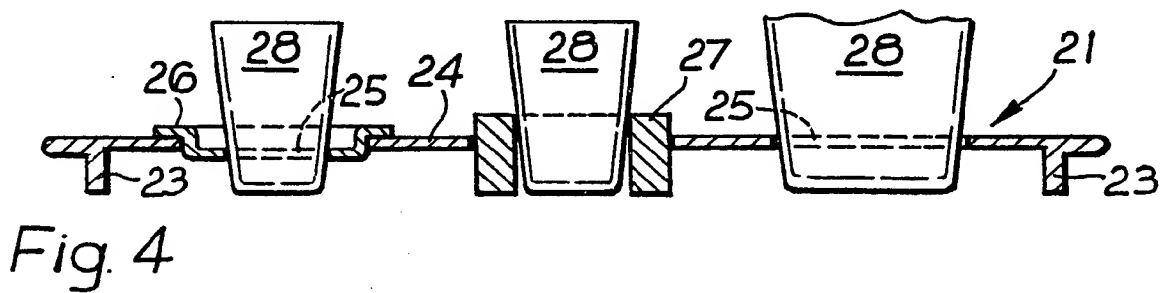
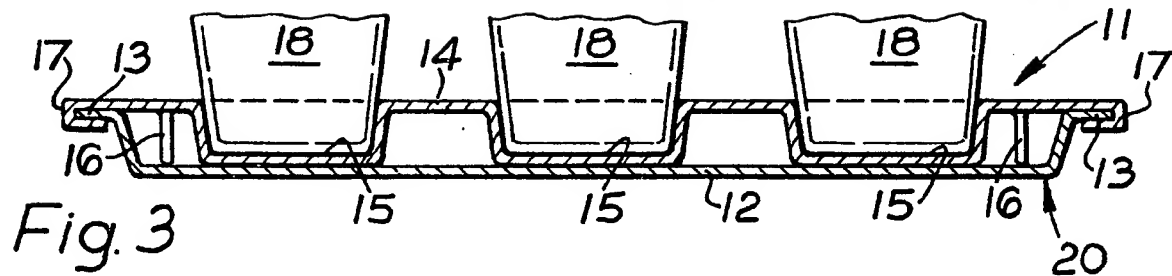
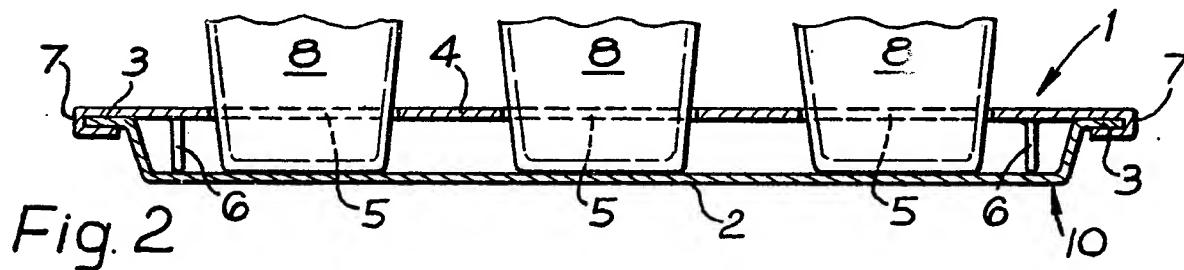
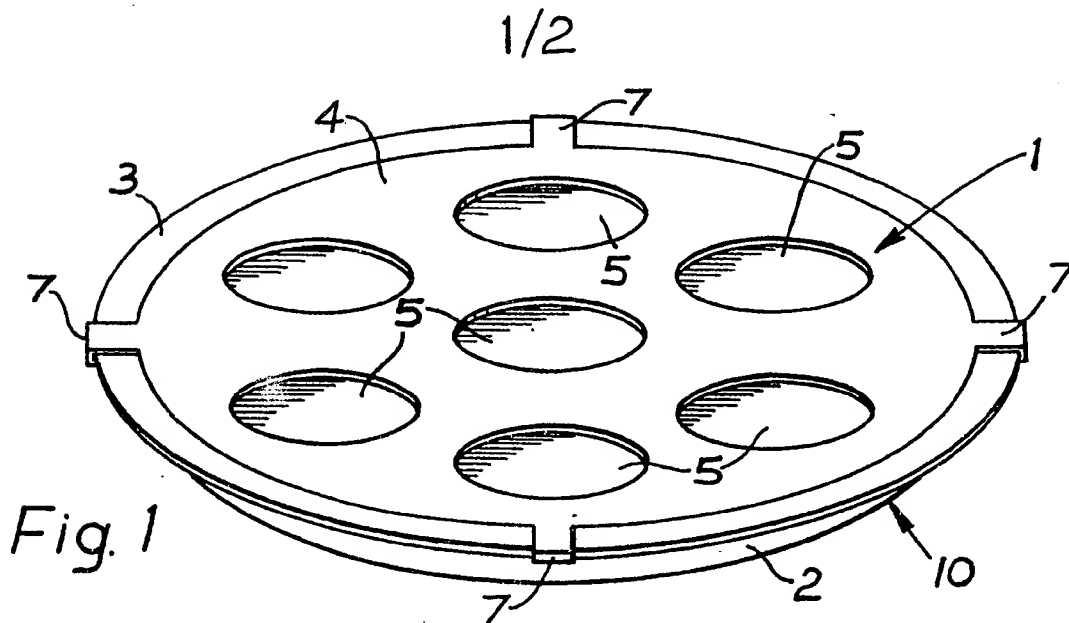
(54) Tray-mounted container
support device

(57) A container support device 1 comprises a web 4 in the form of a sheet of plastics material (or in the form of a wire network) provided with apertures 5 (or recesses) for retaining the bases of containers, such as glasses 8, against lateral displacement, thereby preventing breakages and spillages. The device 1 also has peripheral clips 7 and/or lugs 6 which facilitate mounting of same in a tray 10 of similar dimensions, although the device 1 may also be freestanding by virtue of the lugs 6. Subsidiary inserts, e.g. sleeves, may be located in the apertures 5 to accommodate containers of reduced size.



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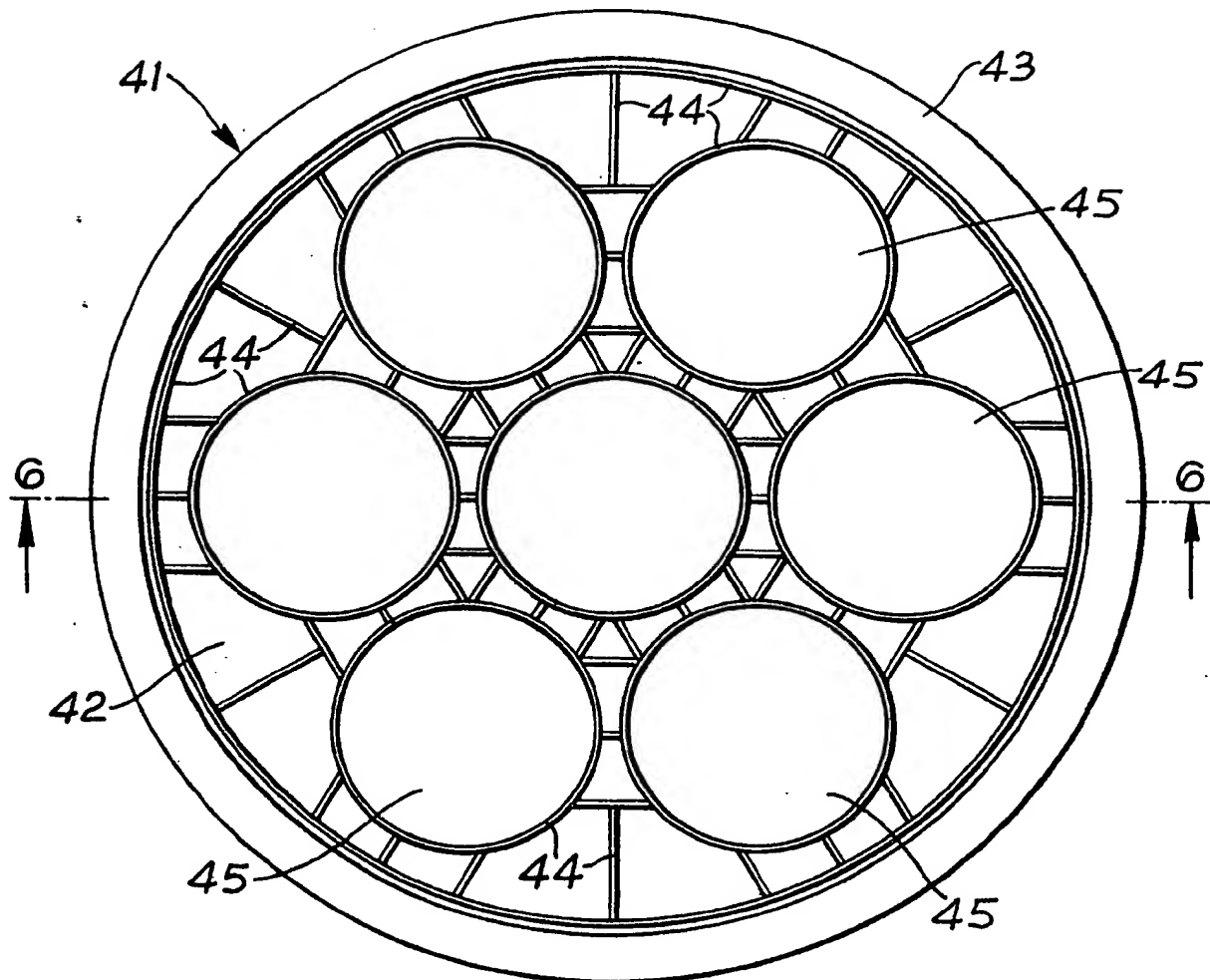


Fig. 5

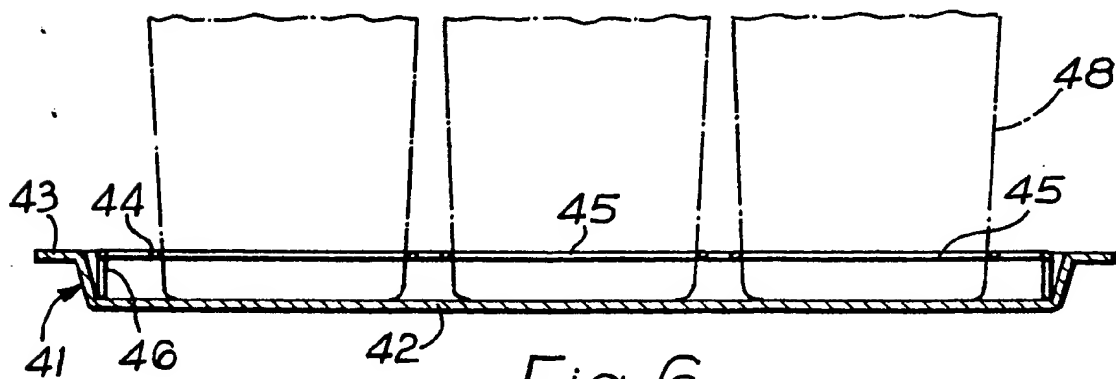


Fig. 6

SPECIFICATION

Container support device

This invention relates to a support device for containers, particularly but not exclusively drinking glasses.

Usually drinking or drinks glasses, such as beer glasses, are carried on a flat tray and there is considerable risk of overturning of the glasses and thus of spilling of drinks and/or breaking of said glasses. Breakages of glasses carried on such trays form a significant proportion of all breakages which in turn form a significant source of expense in all licensed premises.

An object of the invention is to provide a container support device whereby overturning of glasses and other containers is substantially prevented, which device may be applied to an existing tray, or may be used alone.

To this end, the present invention provides a container support device comprising a web, in the form of a sheet of plastics material or in the form of a wire network, provided with apertures or recesses for retaining the bases of containers against lateral displacement and having peripheral clips and/or lugs projecting from one web surface which serve to support said device or facilitate mounting of said device on a tray.

In a preferred embodiment, the support device comprises a circular sheet of rigid plastics material having a pattern of, for example, seven apertures cut out therefrom to receive the bases of glasses, and having lugs formed on its underside to locate the device on and in a tray of corresponding diameter. Alternatively, the device may comprise a web or network made of wire or plastics-coated wire and provided with a number of apertures through which the bases of respective glasses may protrude.

The device is preferably made of transparent material or formed as a network so as to enable any advertising message or logo on the tray surface to be visible. However, in the case of opaque plastics material, any advertising matter on the tray can be reproduced on the support device intended to be mounted thereon.

The device may be retained on the tray by clips gripping a rim of the tray, additionally to or instead of the lugs on the underside of the device. It is, however, not essential that the proposed support device be mounted on a tray, and, particularly when the device is provided with lugs, it is quite capable of independent use in supporting containers.

Advantageously one or more subsidiary inserts may be provided in the apertures or recesses to accommodate containers of smaller dimensions than the apertures or recesses are dimensioned to hold.

The invention will be described further, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view illustrating a preferred embodiment of the container support device of the invention mounted on a tray;

Fig. 2 is a diametrical sectional view through the device and tray of Fig. 1 when in use holding glasses;

Fig. 3 is a diametrical sectional view illustrating a second embodiment of the device of the invention mounted on a tray and in use holding glasses;

Fig. 4 is a diametrical sectional view of a third embodiment of the device of the invention in use supporting glasses;

Fig. 5 is a plan view illustrating a fourth embodiment of the device of the invention mounted in a tray; and

Fig. 6 is a diametrical sectional view of the device and tray of Fig. 5 in use holding glasses.

Referring firstly to Figs. 1 and 2 a preferred embodiment of the container support device 1 of the invention comprises a generally planar circular web 4 of rigid plastics material having seven apertures 5 therein which are intended to receive, locate and hold the bases of glasses or tumblers 8 to prevent them from slipping or knocking together, and if they contain liquid, to prevent the liquid being spilled. The device 1 has a number of lugs 6 projecting perpendicularly from one surface adjacent the periphery of the web 4. These lugs 6 serve to support the web 4 a short distance above a generally horizontal surface. The device 1 also has a number of resilient integral clips 7 around the periphery of the web 4, which clips 7 may serve to retain the device 1 in a tray 10 by engaging over the rim 3 of the tray 10.

In use, as illustrated, the device 1 is usually mounted in a standard circular drinks tray 10 as is commonly used in licensed premises, having a planar base 2 and a stepped rim 3. The clips 7 are engaged over the rim 3 and the lugs 6 support the web 4 above the tray base 2, yet substantially parallel thereto.

The lugs 6 may be made resilient and located and dimensioned to press outwardly on the step of the rim 3 to hold the web 4 in place, in which case the clips 7 may be dispensed with.

Fig. 3 illustrates a second embodiment of the invention in use. A container support device 11 comprising a plastics web 14 is held by lugs 16 and clips 17 in a tray 20 having a base 12 and a stepped rim 13. Glasses 18 are retained in recesses 15 provided in the web 14 instead of in apertures. The lugs 16, if used solely for spacing the web 14 from the base 12, may be dispensed with as the recesses 15 can serve for that purpose.

A third embodiment of the device of the invention is shown in Fig. 4. This device 21 comprises a plastics web 24 having lugs 23 but lacking clips. The web 24 also has apertures 25 therein for location of the bases of glasses 28. As shown, the device 21 need not be mounted on a tray and may be independently supported or free-standing by virtue of the lugs 23.

For retaining glasses of similar size than the apertures 25, for example half pint glasses when apertures 25 are dimensioned to hold pint glasses, subsidiary inserts in the form of rings 26 or

sleeves 27 may be located in the apertures 25. Such subsidiary inserts may be made of metal or plastics material as convenient.

- Figs. 5 and 6 illustrate a fourth embodiment of
- 5 the container support device of the invention comprising a web or network 44 of plastics-coated wire having peripheral lugs 46. In use, these lugs 46 serve to support the web 44 above a tray 41 having a base 42 and a stepped rim 43.
- 10 Glasses 48 are retained on the tray 41 as their bases project through circular apertures 45 in the network 44.

- It should be appreciated that the invention is not in any way limited to the exact details of the
- 15 foregoing embodiments and many variations are possible. In particular, the device may be made of transparent or opaque plastics material, a wire network, or any other suitable materials such as metal or wood. However, opaque plastics is
- 20 probably least expensive to produce, whereas transparent material or an open network permits any advertising matter, on the base of a tray on which the device is mounted to be visible. Also, the device may be of any desired shape e.g.
- 25 rectangular, square, circular or oval, and any desired size, usually corresponding in dimensions

- with the tray it is intended to fit. The size of the apertures or recesses may also vary and, as described, subsidiary inserts may be used where
- 30 required for small glasses.

CLAIMS

1. A container support device comprising a web, in the form of a sheet of plastics material or in the form of a wire network, provided with
- 35 apertures or recesses for retaining the bases of containers against lateral displacement and having peripheral clips and/or lugs projecting from one web surface which serve to support said device or facilitate mounting of said device on a
- 40 tray.
2. A container support device as claimed in claim 1 wherein one or more subsidiary inserts are provided in the apertures or recesses to accommodate containers of smaller dimensions
- 45 than the apertures or recesses are dimensioned to hold.
3. A container support device substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, or Fig. 3, or Fig. 4 or
- 50 Figs. 5 and 6 of the accompanying drawings.

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